

PARTNERSHIP AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Gwilym O Jones (Chair)

Councillors T LI Hughes MBE, K P Hughes, Vaughan Hughes, R LI Jones, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Margaret M Roberts and Nicola Roberts.

Leader of the Council – Councillor Llinos M Huws.

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive,
Deputy Chief Executive,
Director of Social Services (for items 5 & 6),
Head of Democratic Services,
Policy and Strategy Manager (CWO) (for item 5),
Service Manager – Safeguarding and Quality Improvement (AH) (for item 6),
Scrutiny Manager (AD),
Scrutiny Officer (SR),
Committee Officer (MEH).

APOLOGIES: Councillor Glyn Haynes.

Mr Dafydd Gruffydd – Menter Môn,
Mrs Anest Frazer (The Church in Wales),
Mr Keith Roberts (The Roman Catholic Church).

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Eric W Jones (invited in respect of Item 3 as representative of the Council on the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority).

Councillor Dylan Rees (invited in respect of Item 3 as representative of the Council on the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority and invited in respect of Item 4 as representative of the Council on the North Wales Police & Crime Panel).

Mr Gwyn Jones – Community Safety Manager (Gwynedd & Anglesey) – North Wales Fire & Rescue (in respect of Item 3).

Mr Arfon Jones – North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner (in respect of Item 4).

Superintendent Richie Green (Gwynedd & Anglesey) (in respect of Item 4).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies received as noted above.

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Dylan Rees declared a personal interest in respect of Item 3 (presentation by the North Wales Fire & Rescue Service) and in respect of Item 4 (presentation by the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner). Councillor Rees was invited to attend in respect of both items as he is a representative of the Council on both outside bodies.

Councillor Eric W Jones declared a personal interest in respect of Item 3 (presentation by the North Wales Fire & Rescue Service) as he was invited to attend as representative of the Council on the outside body.

3 NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Chair welcomed Mr Gwyn Jones, Community Safety Manager (Gwynedd & Anglesey) – North Wales Fire and Rescue Service to the meeting.

Mr Gwyn Jones gave a presentation to the Committee on the functions of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service as regards to fire safety, firefighting, attending road traffic accidents and emergencies (water rescue/flooding) in accordance with the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. He said that a decade ago statistics showed that North Wales had the highest proportion to population of deaths from accidental fires in dwellings in England and Wales and it was considered unacceptable. A Chief Fire Officer's Task Group was established to examine the Service's strategy and policies for preventing accidental deaths from fires within the home together with reviewing performance management processes and profiling of victims and fires incidents. Mr Jones further said that contributory factors to accidental deaths from fires were being alone; age (over half were over 60); having a disability; living in rented accommodation; smoking and cooking left unattended; alcohol and drugs and having no working smoke alarms. He said that the profile of the Fire & Rescue Service was reviewed with joint working undertaken with services within local authorities, police, health trust and other agencies to share information and identify vulnerable persons to avoid possible accidental fires and deaths. He further referred to a recruitment scheme undertaken by the North Wales Fire & Rescue Service on Anglesey which has resulted in 10 recruitments.

Mr Jones referred to the Performance Monitoring Report – April 2019 to September 2019 which was circulated to Members of the Committee. He noted that during the first half of 2019/20 the Service handled a total of 6,601 emergency calls and attended 2,653 emergencies including fires, false alarms and special service incidents. The Service attended slightly more road traffic accidents during the first half of this year than in the same period last year. He further said that during 2018, Welsh Government afforded funding to alleviate pressures on other Emergency Services as regards to 'Falls within the Home'. The North Wales Fire & Rescue Service was able to attend to a persons who had sustained a fall within the home in one hour and this may have enabled that person not been on the floor for a

considerable time and not having to be admitted to hospital and needing treatment. However, funding for the 'Falls in the Home' scheme has now ceased.

The Chair thanked the Community Safety Manager (Gwynedd & Anglesey) for his presentation. The Committee considered the information presented and made the following points:-

- Clarification was sought whether the Fire & Rescue Service were assisting or had taken over the 'Falls in the Home' scheme on behalf of the Health Trust Ambulance Service. The Community Safety Manager (Gwynedd & Anglesey) responded that the 'Falls in the Home' Scheme was a pilot scheme to reduce the pressure on the Health Service. Councillor Dylan Rees, the Council's representative on the North Wales Fire & Rescue Service said that this was a highly successful pilot scheme and the Fire & Rescue Service was able to respond expeditiously than the Ambulance Service due to the pressures they are under. He said that statistic has shown that a lower proportion of patients were admitted to hospital and resulted in lowering the pressures on the health trust. The North Wales Fire & Rescue Service is disappointed that Welsh Government has ceased the funding towards the 'Falls at Home' scheme as evidence showed the success of the scheme. Members of the Committee considered that a letter be sent on behalf of this Committee to Welsh Government expressing their disappointment that the pilot scheme towards 'Falls at Home' scheme has ceased and Welsh Government needs to reconsider such a scheme;
- Reference was made that the recruitment of Fire Fighters and it was evident that Anglesey is dependent on persons volunteering for the Fire Service. The Community Safety Manager (Gwynedd & Anglesey) responded that recruitment within local communities is important and it was expressed that a salary is attached to any person volunteering to be a Fire Fighter.

The Chair thanked the Community Safety Manager (Gwynedd & Anglesey) for attending the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to write to Welsh Government expressing disappointment that the funding for the 'Falls within the Home' scheme has ceased and that Welsh Government should reconsider affording funding towards this scheme.

ACTION : As noted above.

4 NORTH WALES POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Chair welcomed Mr Arfon Jones, North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and Superintendent Richie Green (Gwynedd & Anglesey) to the meeting.

Mr Arfon Jones gave an insight to the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner to the meeting. He said that following his election as Police and Crime Commissioner in 2012 he had a duty to produce a Police and Crime Plan within 12 months of taking office. The Plan sets out the strategic direction of North Wales Police for his term as Police and Crime Commissioner. He referred that he has identified five priorities within his second publication of the Police and Crime Plan for 2017-2021 as follows :-

- **Domestic Abuse**

- Each day North Wales Police record an average of 26 domestic incidents. Over the past seven years, 936 women were killed by men in England and Wales;
- Domestic Abuse is the highest risk facing North Wales Police due to the broad impact of the victim (physical, psychological and financial), the number of recorded crimes and an increasing trend.

- **Modern Slavery**

- Modern Slavery is a term used to refer to the exploitation of vulnerable people through activities such as human trafficking and forced labour. This crime is often hidden from public view, with victims frequently reluctant to approach the police due to the levels of control and fear placed upon them;
- Need to ensure that victims are recognised as victims and not dismissed simply as perpetrators of other crimes such as illegal immigration, prostitution or shoplifting;
- Holyhead Port makes North Wales a key area in the UK for Modern Slavery.

- **Serious and Organised Crime**

- The Government regards serious and organised crime as one of the greatest threats to the UK's national security and costs the UK more than £24 billion a year. The National Serious and Organised Crime Strategy is built on the framework used for counter terrorism and sets out how opportunities will be taken to prevent people getting involved in serious and organised crime, strengthen protection against and responses to it, and to pursue the criminals;
- A number of serious organised crime operations have been tackled in the Port Holyhead and across the North Wales border.

- **Sexual Abuse (including child sexual exploitation)**

- The number of rape and other serious sexual assaults, often committed by partners or people known to their victims, reported to the police are high. However, there is a need to encourage victims to come forward to report such incidents;
- A Team has been established by North Wales Police to tackle child sexual exploitation (CSE). Working partnership with other organisations is also undertaken to ensure that all that can be done to safeguard these children is given the priority it deserves. There has also been increased incidents of 'on-line grooming' across the country.

- **Delivering Safer Neighbourhoods**

- The visible presence of the police deters crimes which occur in public places, reassures the majority of the public and reinforces its links with the police;

- A successful operation occurred in Holyhead when youths were causing disturbance near a fast-food outlet. Local PCSO's received an award for the assisting in guiding youths to attend local activities rather than causing a nuisance to local residents in the area of the fast-food outlet.

Mr Jones further said that he wished to highlight the partnership working between North Wales Police and the County Council, which is highly regarded, and reference was made to the 'Early Action Together' programme. The Early Action Together ACEs learning network provides helpful information for the public, professionals and Police about the Early Action Together programme and its work in relation to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The aim is to share useful information and research about ACEs as well as best practice and resources. The programme has reduced the protection referrals to the County Council's Social Services Department.

As Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr Jones said that his vision is to stop offenders re-offending. He referred to the 'Check-Point' Cymru programme which aims to help keep minor offenders out of trouble and out the courts. Some offenders have mostly drugs related issues and mental health problems and the 'Checkpoint' programme seeks to afford courses to help and support people within their communities.

Superintendent Richie Green highlighted local issues within Anglesey to the Committee. He referred to the partnership working between North Wales Police and the Local Authority to respond to problems of anti-social behaviour and the reasons behind the problems of people offending. He further said that regular meetings with the local Health Authority as regards to vulnerable persons offending due to drug related problems and mental health issues is paramount to the work of the Police Authority.

The Chair thanked the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and Superintendent Richie Green for their presentation to the Committee. The Committee considered the information presented and made the following points:-

- Reference was made as to the partnership working with the local Health Authority as regards to vulnerable persons with mental health issues. Questions were raised as to whether the Health Authority and other agencies were contributing to the preventative work for vulnerable persons who may be in danger of offending. The North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner responded that the situation has improved over the last year as to the support given to vulnerable persons when they find themselves in police custody. Training has been afforded to Custody Officers and Control Room Staff as to how to deal with persons with mental health issues and statistics show that the response to people in crisis has improved. Superintendent Richie Green said that due to partner agencies meeting on a regular basis on Anglesey the support to vulnerable persons with mental health issues has significantly improved;
- Reference was made that complaints by local residents to elected members, on a regular basis, is issues relating to the 101 non-emergency number. The North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner agreed that there is an issue with the

101 non-emergency number. He said that an on-line system needs to be implemented to release staff in the Control Centre to answer emergency calls;

- Reference was made that anti-social behaviour figures has shown a decreased recently. A Member referred to the recent incidents of anti-social behaviour as in the Llangefni area and questioned as to the number of PCSO's employed within the area. Superintendent Richie Green responded that there has been a decrease in the number of PCSO's on the Island but 5 extra Police Officers have been employed since October last year. The North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner said that it is anticipated that 200 extra Police Officers are to be employed over the next 3 years but it was emphasised that the recruitment process can only employ Police Officers and not PCSO's;
- Members referred that it has become evident that there has been a rise in cocaine use rather than heroin. Superintendent Richie Green responded that as part of the Christmas period 'drink drive' campaign it has become apparent that there has been an increase in recreational cocaine use in first time users rather than cannabis. He noted that this issue is of concern at it keeps county lines prevalent in North Wales;
- Questions were raised whether North Wales Police deal with 'on-line' and telephone fraud. The North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner said that as part of the Police and Crime Plan he intends to establish a Team to investigate fraud against vulnerable persons. He said that there is numerous incidents with people having lost a considerable amount of money to 'on-line and telephone fraud. Banks are now working with the Police Authority to stop suspicious transactions from people's bank accounts.

The Chair thanked the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and Superintendent Richie Green for attending the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to note the report.

ACTION : None

5 STRATEGIC EQUALITIES PLAN - 2020/2024

Submitted – a report by the Head of Democratic Services in respect of the above.

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Equality and Diversity said that the Strategic Equality Plan sets out the Authority's ambition for equality to build a fairer society for all of Anglesey's citizens and helping the Council to achieve a vision for an Anglesey that is healthy and prosperous where families can thrive.

The Director of Social Services as lead Officer on the Senior Leadership Team leading on the Equalities said that the Equality Act 2010 places a duty on all local authorities to publish a Strategic Equality Plan and its objectives must be reviewed at least every four years. A new Plan must be published for the period 2020-2024 and the purpose of the Plan is to set out the steps the Council is taking to fulfil its specific equality duties. It was noted that the Plan for 2020/2024 will submitted to the Executive and full Council for approval.

The Policy and Strategy Manager reported that the objectives within the Draft Strategic Equality Plan 2020/2024 attached to the report are based on the main challenges facing Wales, which need attention, identified in the report published by the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights, 'Is Wales Fairer'? The objectives are also based upon regional priorities identified via joint engagement conducted by the North Wales Public Sector Equality Network (NWPSSEN) and local priorities identified via engagement with Medrwn Môn Wellbeing Network.

The Policy and Strategy Manager reported that the Council recognises the statutory requirements to undertake equality impact assessments and that carrying out robust assessments is an effective way of ensuring that any potential areas of inequality are identified and addressed promptly securing a consistent approach across the authority in terms of completing effective impact assessments (EIA's) was identified as a priority back in 2011/2012 and throughout this time, continued developing of the Council's arrangements has been undertaken with the aim of mainstreaming this process into day-to-day work carried out within the Council.

The Policy and Strategy Manager made reference to 5.1 within the Plan – 'Improve personal security and access to justice'; more than one organisation will contribute to achieving this priority with the Council contributing towards the personal security element and the police towards the other elements.

The Policy and Strategy Manager outlined the priorities within the Draft Strategic Equality Plan for 2020/2024 and noted that not all the priorities are relevant to every service within the Authority and gave an example that objective 3 within the Plan refers to improved physical access to services, transport, the built environment and open spaces; this priority would be a matter for the Highways, Waste and Property Services to address. She stated that the priorities are evenly distributed across Council Services. However, she expressed that it must be stressed that Elected Members and Staff have a responsibility to address Equalities within the day-to-day work of the Council. She also stated that the work is not confined to achieving the priorities within the Plan since other priorities may become apparent and will need addressing.

The Committee considered the report and raised the following matters:-

- Clarification was sought as to whom had identified the priority areas of equalities within the report. The Policy and Strategy Manager responded that the Council has prioritised the priorities within the Strategic Equality Plan with regard to evidence base and the need to address issues raised;
- Clarification was sought as to how the Council intends to strengthen the process for engaging with individuals protected under the Equality Act 2010 when developing the Strategic Equality Plan in the future. The Policy and Strategy Manager responded that engagement has been undertaken with Medrwn Môn's Wellbeing Network to ascertain their priorities and local concerns. Following drafting the priorities within the Draft Strategic Equality Plan consultation was undertaken with Medrwn Môn's on the draft priorities identified.

It was RESOLVED:-

- that the Executive approves the Strategic Equality Plan for 2020/2024;
- that arrangements are put in place for the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to monitor progress on equality on an annual basis, as a matter of course.

ACTION : As noted above.

6 NORTH WALES SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

Submitted – a report by the Director of Social Services in respect of the above.

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Social Services reported that the Annual Report provides an overview of the work of both the North Wales Children and the North Wales Adult Safeguarding Boards from April 2018 to March 2019 and the progress made in delivering the key objectives across the region to safeguard people. She expressed that the North Wales Safeguarding Board is a Regional Safeguarding Board.

The Director of Social Services reported that as part of the Council's Corporate Priorities the Council believes that every child and adult has the right to be safe from harm. One of the responsibilities of the North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board is to ensure that each North Wales local authority safeguards the people that live in their respective County. The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 provides the statutory framework for Social Care in Wales. The Safeguarding Boards (General) (Wales) Regulations 2015 relate to setting up and the function of the Safeguarding Boards. Regulation 5 and 6 relate to the making of Annual Plans and Annual Reports by Safeguarding Boards. He noted that Welsh Government Working Together to Safeguard People Guidance, states that the objectives of a Safeguarding Children Board are to protect children within its area who are experiencing, or are at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and to prevent children within its area from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. The objectives of a Safeguarding Adults' Board are to protect adults within its area who have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs), and are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect and to prevent those adults within its area becoming at risk of abuse or neglect. These objectives within the Regional Safeguarding Board are relevant not only to local authorities but all partner agencies within North Wales.

The Director of Social Services further referred to the priorities noted within the Annual Report for 2018/19 and 2019/20 to the Committee. He referred to the key achievements of the Safeguarding Boards during 2018/19 and reported that a community of practice event was established to bring services together and to share good practice, challenges and research with professionals from different agencies. A safeguarding video was launched 'See Something /Say Something'; which is available on the Safeguarding Board's website and is available for local agencies to use. He noted that the Safeguarding Board has a large attendance list and the increasing demands, complexity and expectations on all the agencies involved in safeguarding is extensive.

The Committee considered the report and raised the following matters:-

- Reference was made that the Safeguarding Board and Sub-Groups has an extensive membership and clarification was sought as to the attendance of multi-agencies of these meetings. The Director of Social Services responded that attendance within the Board and Sub-Groups has improved. He further said that achievement by the Sub-Groups is extensive and considered that since the establishment of the Safeguarding Board he considered that safeguarding issues have had a much higher profile in North Wales;
- Clarification was sought as to whether the Health Trust is taking responsibility within the Safeguarding Board. The Director of Social Services responded that there are examples over the last two years when the Health Trust has had to respond to difficult issues associated with safeguarding as was faced at a Mental Health Unit in North Wales. The Health Board became accountable for the action plan to the North Wales Board;
- Reference was made to the launch of the 'See Something /Say Something' by the Safeguarding Board. Questions were raised as to whether the public confidentiality is protected in reporting incidents. The Director of Social Services responded that there is whistleblowing policy for staff Members within the Authority and a similar protection is given to persons to report incidents without the fear of victimisation.

It was RESOLVED to note the information contained within the North Wales Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2018/19.

ACTION : As note above.

7 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted – a report by the Scrutiny Manager on the Committee's Forward Work Programme to April 2020.

The Scrutiny Manager referred to the meeting scheduled for the 10th March, 2020 and noted that this meeting will need to be rearranged due to unforeseen circumstances and arrangements will be made to change the date of this meeting. She said that the item – Collaboration with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board will need to be rescheduled to a future meeting of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee due to availability of representatives of the Health Board.

It was RESOLVED to note the Work Programme to April 2020.

ACTION : As noted above.

The meeting concluded at 4.05 pm

**COUNCILLOR GWILYM O JONES
CHAIR**